



# 2018 South Carolina Black Bear Hunting Rules & Regulations



- It is unlawful to buy, sell, barter or exchange a bear or bear part or attempt to buy, sell, barter or exchange a bear or bear parts. Transportation of a freshly killed bear or bear part is unlawful except during the bear season. Any person violating these offenses must be fined not more than \$2,500 or imprisoned for not more than 2 years, or both, and hunting and fishing privileges will be suspended for 3 years.
- It is unlawful to feed bears or to hunt bears by the aid of bait.
- In addition to a hunting license and Big Game Permit, a bear tag is required to hunt bear. An individual can only purchase 1 bear tag. The Statewide Bag Limit is 1 Bear, regardless if someone hunts in both Game Zone 1 and Game Zone 4.
- The possession and use of a bear tag is limited to the individual to whom it was issued.
- Tags must be attached to the bear before being moved from the point of kill. It is unlawful to possess an untagged bear. Tag must remain attached to carcass until the bear is processed (cut up)

*For full text of laws related to bear hunting refer to SC Code of Laws 50-1-125, 50-1-130, 50-11-430, 50-11-435, 50-11-440*

## Seasons, Bag Limits and Requirements

### Game Zone 1

Still Hunt (No Dogs): Oct. 17-23 (NO SUNDAY HUNTING ON WMAs)

- Statewide Limit: 1 bear; no sow with cubs, no bears 100 lbs. or less.

Party Dog Hunts: Oct. 24-30 (NO SUNDAY HUNTING ON WMAs)

- Statewide Limit: 5 bears per party; no sow with cubs, no bears 100 lbs. or less.
- All parties (maximum party size of 25) must register by application due Sept. 1. For application write SCDNR, 311 Natural Resources Dr., Clemson, SC 29631 or download at [www.dnr.sc.gov/bearhunting](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/bearhunting). Groups hunting together are considered 1 party.

- Harvested Bears MUST BE REPORTED BY MIDNIGHT ON THE DAY OF HARVEST to Clemson SCDNR at **864-986-6249** or **1-844-SC1-BEAR** (1-844-721-2327) or <http://dnr.sc.gov/bearcheck>

### Game Zone 4

Private Land in Georgetown, Horry, Marion, and Williamsburg counties ONLY and the following WMAs: Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve WMA, Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve WMA, Little Pee Dee River Heritage Preserve Complex, Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve WMA, and Wee Tee WMA

Still Hunts (No Dogs): Oct. 17-30 (NO SUNDAY HUNTING ON WMAs)

- Statewide Limit: 1 bear; no sow with cubs, no bears 100 lbs. or less.
- 2018 Harvest Quota - **30 bears all counties & WMAs combined**. If 30 bears are harvested prior to Oct. 30, SCDNR may close the hunting season with a 24 hour notice. Hunters are responsible for monitoring the season status.

Season status (open or closed) can be checked by calling **1-844-SC1-BEAR** (1-844-721-2327) and will be posted at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/bearcheck>

- Harvested bears MUST BE REPORTED BY MIDNIGHT ON THE DAY OF HARVEST.  
To report a harvested bear contact: **1-844-SC1-BEAR** (1-844-721-2327) or <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/bearcheck>

**When reporting a harvest you must provide: name, phone #, bear tag #, sex, weight, date of kill and county of kill.**

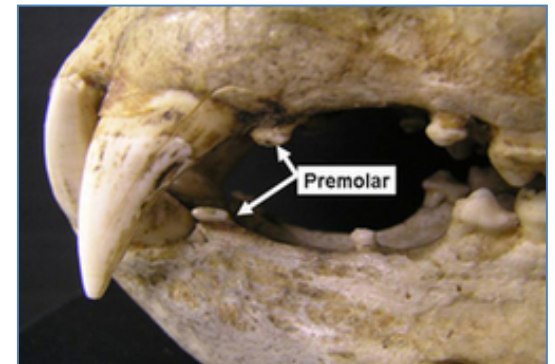
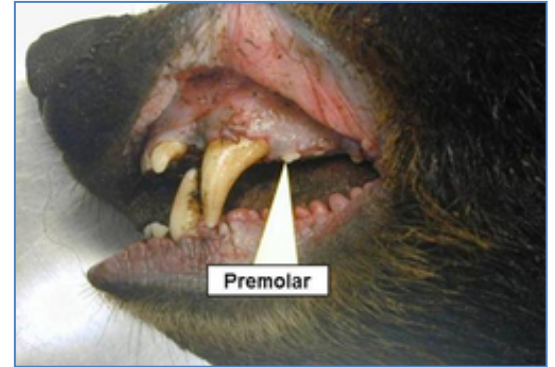
Tag a bear by making a slit in the hamstring on rear leg,  
insert tag through slit, insert spear point of tag into dome until it locks.



## Tooth Collection

SCDNR collects biological data from harvested bears to determine bear condition, sex and age. Part of this effort includes the collection of a small tooth (premolar) located behind the larger canines which is used to determine the age of the bear. SCDNR staff may not be able to physically check every bear, so hunter cooperation by submitting a tooth from their bear is an important contribution to bear management. This information is useful to annually assess the impact of harvest on the bear population by determination of the average age of harvested male and female bears in the various bear hunting areas. Additionally, by recording age and sex of harvested bears over a period of years, biologists can more accurately model bear populations. The SCDNR is asking for your help by sending in a premolar tooth from all harvested bears.

After you report your bear harvest, SCDNR will either contact you to examine the bear or will ask you to use the tooth collection packet. If you take your bear to a taxidermist, check with the taxidermist to confirm whether your bear tooth can be sent in to SCDNR. Many taxidermists will submit the tooth samples for you. Removal of the premolar tooth will not affect your mounted bear, as the original skull is not typically used in bear mounts.



### Instructions

- 1) The tooth we need is the very small tooth immediately behind the canine tooth (see photos).
- 2) Use a small flathead screwdriver or knife blade to push the gum down and away from the tooth. Work your tool or knife all around the tooth and into the gums to loosen the tooth.
- 3) Pull the tooth out with pliers or pry it out using the canine as a lever.
- 4) Place the tooth in the provided small white envelope and label appropriately.

**IMPORTANT: DO NOT BREAK THE TOOTH OFF AT THE GUMLINE. WE NEED THE WHOLE TOOTH INCLUDING THE ROOT.**

## Hair Collection

SCDNR Biologists also use bear hair for DNA analysis. Hair is collected and analyzed from hunter harvested bears, road kill bears, trapped bears and from hair snare traps deployed for research. There is enough DNA in the root of a hair to identify individual bears. This data is used to estimate population size, distribution and genetic variation, all indications of a population's health. If we are unable to come to you to collect samples we also ask for your assistance in collecting a small sample of hair.

### Instructions

- 1) Grab a small tuft of hair (at least 10-12 hairs) with a pair of pliers placed close to the hide.
- 2) With a firm & swift jerk, pull out a tuft of hairs being sure to get the root/follicle of the hairs.
- 3) Place the hairs in the provided small white envelope with the premolar tooth and label appropriately.

***More detailed instructions, photos and a video will be available on the SCDNR website during bear season.***

**We appreciate your assistance & cooperation in collecting these important biological samples.**